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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

CATECHISM

OF THE

History of Newfoundland,

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

ON THE

DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

BY THE

ANCIENT SCANDINAVIANS.

INTENDED CHIEFLY FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS.

BY WM. CHAS. ST. JOHN.

(LATE U. S. VICE-CONSUL FOR THE BAY OF CONCEPTION.)

REVISED EDITION.

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WILLIAM CHARLES ST. JOHN,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

TO

JOHN IRVING RODDICK, ESQUIRE,

PRINCIPAL OF THE HARBOR GRACE GRAMMAR SCHOOL,

THE FOLLOWING SHEETS

ARE CORDIALLY DEDICATED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFATORY NOTE.

Some years ago, while residing in Newfoundland, I was induced to publish a brief history of that country drawn up in the catechetical form, and adapted to the use of schools. It got into pretty general circulation, and was instrumental, I believe, in removing a vast deal of ignorance which until then prevailed respecting one of the oldest dependencies of the British Crown.

Having now revised the original edition, brought down the narrative to the close of last year, and prefixed an Introductory Chapter containing matter which, I presume, will be interesting to readers generally, I again offer the little manual to the public, with the honest persuasion that the time bestowed upon it has not been thrown away. At all events, this or a similar synopsis is indispensably necessary in the schools of Newfoundland.

W. C. St. John.

Boston, January, 1855.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

It was long rumored that the Continent of America had been known to Europeans hundreds of years prior to the time of Columbus. Traditionary tales of transatlantic voyages performed by the Scandinavians in the tenth century, were handed down from father to son for many generations. Some of these, it must be confessed, were so vague and marvellous as wholly to belong to the region of fable; while others were set forth with such minuteness of detail, and accompanied by so many statements of an astronomical as well as a geographical character, all agreeing with indubitable facts brought to light by subsequent discovery, that it was difficult to evade the force of evidence which such accumulated testimonies set before us.

At the instance, we believe, of that venerable philosopher and eminent scientific traveller, Alexander

Von Humboldt, this curious and interesting question has been investigated afresh by the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries; and it would certainly appear from the researches of these celebrated men, notwithstanding the obscurities which enveloped certain portions of the narratives which claimed their attention, that the Northern Atlantic had been crossed on several occasions at this early period, first accidentally, and from stress of weather, by which the voyagers were carried westward far beyond the limits of their destined haven; and afterwards, by the voluntary undertaking of enterprising men who, like their renowned successors Columbus and Cabot, fearlessly launched away upon the bosom of the deep in quest of distant and unexplored regions.

The earliest account on record among the numerous documents to which the above-named society had access, is that of a voyage performed by one Biarne, son of Heriulf Bardson, a follower of Eric the Red, who, in 986, emigrated from Iceland to Greenland, where he formed a settlement. Biarne happened to be absent on a voyage to Norway at the time of his father's removal, but on his return home he immediately resolved to rejoin his parent though unacquainted with the sea which he had to traverse. The result of this bold attempt is circumstantially narrated in the before named documents, and we cannot do better than quote the substance of those papers as given in the London Geographical Journal, for 1838:—

"They (Biarne and attendants) set sail, but met with northerly winds and fogs, and after many days'

sailing they knew not whither they had been carried. When the weather again cleared up, they at last saw a land which was without mountains, overgrown with wood, and having many gentle elevations. As this land did not correspond to the description of Greenland, they left it to larboard, and continued sailing two days, when they saw another land which was flat, and overgrown with wood. From thence they stood out to sea, and sailed three days with a S. W. wind, when they saw a third land, which was high and mountainous and covered with icebergs (glaciers); they coasted along the shore and saw that it was an island. They did not go on shore, as Biarne did not find the country to be inviting. Bearing away from this island, they stood out to sea with the same wind, and after four days' sailing with fresh gales they reached Heriulfsnes in Greenland."

"About ten years after this," continues the same authority, "Biarne paid a visit to Eric, Earl of Norway, and told him of his voyage, and of the unknown lands he had discovered. He was blamed by many for not having examined these countries more accurately. On his return to Greenland, there was much talk about undertaking a voyage of discovery. Leif, a son of Eric the Red, bought Biarne's ship, and equipped it with thirty-five men, among whom was a German named Tyrker, who had long resided with his father, and who had been very fond of Leif in his childhood. In the year 1000 they commenced the projected voyage, *and came first to the land which Biarne had seen last.* They cast anchor and went on shore."

The description which these navigators gave of this country, and of the various lands which they visited in succession as they coasted along shore, perfectly agreed with what had previously been given by the adventurous Biarne. Leif, however, pushed his discoveries much farther than Biarne — reached a land that abounded in grapes, to which he gave the name of Vinland. Here he remained during the winter, and returned to Greenland the spring following.

In 1002, a brother of Leif's, named Thorwald, undertook a voyage to the far west. He and his companions arrived safely at Vinland; they found, and for a time occupied, the very huts, or Leifsbooths, which their predecessors had erected; explored much of the country, continuing therein two whole years; and finally, coasting their way eastward towards home, fell in with the Skrellings, or Esquimaux, with whom, as the chronicler relates, "they came to blows," in which rencontre Thorwald lost his life, and his remains were buried on a promontory which he had admired a day or two before for its picturesque beauty. Upon this promontory, or point of land, the survivors erected a number of crosses, naming it Crossness "in all time coming." We are told further that Thorstein Ericson, a brother of the deceased, fitted out a ship with the view to fetching home the remains of Thorwald, but was frustrated in the attempt by a succession of *adverse* gales which eventually drove him upon the *western* settlement of Greenland, where he died during the winter.

The next year, one Thorfinn, a person of great sub-

stance, of illustrious lineage, and Irish descent, took his departure from Greenland for those remote south-westerly regions. His ships, three in number, after encountering the usual amount of sea obstacles, reached the places described by the preceding adventurers — namely, Helluland and Markland, (the latter about three days' sail to the south west of the former,) where they made some tarry, and afterwards steering towards the south, came upon Vinland, or land of grapes, which refreshing and delicious fruit they found there in abundance. Having fulfilled his mission, Thorfinn bade farewell to Vinland, leaving it on the left, and so retracing his course along shore, touched successively at Markland, "the land of thick woods," and at Helluland — remarkable for its icebergs, slate-rocks, and foxes, — and after some weeks' sailing on the ocean, arrived once more in safety at Ericsford, in Greenland.

Such are some of the accounts handed down to us, through the medium of ancient manuscripts, of voyages athwart the Atlantic by the Scandinavian Northmen. That they are worthy of credence can scarcely be doubted after the unqualified admissions of the illustrious individuals who compose the association before referred to.

Assuming Markland to be identical with our modern *Nova Scotia*, then it follows that the land situated at the distance of three or four days' sail thence in a north-easterly direction must have been no other than *Newfoundland* (proper), or the coast of *Labrador*,

while the region discovered at a similar distance to the south-west of Markland must have been the coast of what now forms the *State of Massachusetts*. At one of the more southerly positions attained by these "ancient mariners," the sun was observed to rise at half-past seven and set at half-past four, giving *nine hours for the shortest day*. With these data there can be no difficulty in deducing the latitude of the place of observation, which must have been in 41° 24′ 10″. There are other particulars, equally convincing, which go to corroborate the reports so long in circulation about the discovery of America by the ancient Scandinavians; but we must rest here, and refer the reader, curious in such matters, to the extended report in the ANTIQUITATES AMERICANÆ, published by the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries.

HISTORY OF NEWFOUNDLAND.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE DISCOVERY OF NEWFOUNDLAND BY JOHN CABOT.

(1497 — 1583.)

Question. By whom was this country discovered in the fifteenth century?

Answer. By John Gabota, or Cabot, a Venetian, who, on a voyage of discovery in the reign and under the sanction of Henry VII. of England, (on the 24th June, 1497,) fell in with that part of the Island called Cape Bonavista.

Q. Did Cabot make any stay here?

A. No; he coasted along the continent of America until he found himself in latitude 38° North, when, being short of provisions, he returned to England with "a good cargo."

Q. Of what did this cargo consist?

A. Probably of furs and fish; he carried with him also three of the aborigines of the island of St. John, now Prince Edward Island.

Q. What name did Cabot give to Newfoundland?

A. That of Baccalaos, the Indian name for cod-fish.

Q. In what year did Europeans begin to establish a fishery on these shores?

A. In 1502.

Q. What people were the first to embark in this adventure?

A. The Portuguese, and subsequently the Biscayans and the French; the first of whom had, in 1578, no fewer than 50 vessels engaged in this occupation.

Q. Who was Gasper de Corte Real?

A. A distinguished Portuguese, who, in 1501, visited this country; he gave to Conception Bay its present name.

Q. When did the *English* begin to be fully aware of the great importance of the Newfoundland fishery?

A. About the year 1540.

Q. What British ports were then most extensively engaged in this branch of commerce?

A. London, Biddeford, Bristol and Barnstaple.

Q. Were there not in the reign of Elizabeth some illustrious characters engaged in expeditions to this Island?

A. There were, namely, — Sir Humphry Gilbert and his relative Sir Walter Raleigh.

Q. In what year did Sir Humphry take possession of this Island in the name of his sovereign Elizabeth?

A. He formally took possession on the 5th August, 1583.

Q. Did he meet with any opposition?

A. At first he did; the masters of the foreign vessels lying in the harbor of St. John's refused to admit him into port; but upon his preparing to gain an entrance by force, they thought it expedient not to offer resistance.

Q. How many vessels had Sir Humphry under his command?

A. Four; five had originally been fitted out, but one of them, the *Raleigh*, having on board Sir Walter himself, was, in consequence of an infectious distemper which broke out among the crew, obliged to put back to England.

Q. After effecting an entrance, in what manner did Sir Humphry proceed?

A. He convened a general meeting of the British and foreign merchants, — caused the commission under the Great Seal of England to be read in their presence — informed them that he personally stood in possession of the harbor of St. John's and all the adjacent land within the circumference of six hundred miles, and also that he was duly empowered to enact laws for the government of the same.

Q. What followed?

A. He granted several portions of his land; caused parties to explore the coast and examine the interior; and on the 20th August in the same year, set sail from St. John's on a cruize to the westward.

Q. Did the voyage prove fortunate?

A. No; on the 27th of that month they bore in upon the land, and a violent gale springing up from the S. E. accompanied by heavy rain and thick fog, it was with the greatest difficulty that the fleet was preserved from entire destruction.

Q. Were any of the vessels lost?

A. Yes; at day-break on the 29th, in latitude 45° North, and about 260 miles to the West of Cape Race, (probably on the Isle of Sable,) the *Delight*, Capt. Maurice Brown, went on shore and was dashed to pieces; the others fortunately gained the open sea and escaped.

Q. Were the crew of the *Delight* saved?

A. Out of 116 souls, 14 only got safe to land; the captain was among the number that perished.

Q. What became of the other ships?

A. On the first of September, orders were given to steer for England. In about a week after, a dreadful storm arose, when the *Squirrel* (Sir Humphry's vessel) sunk, and her crew together with her illustrious commander unhappily were drowned.

The remaining vessel (the *Golden Hind*) arrived in Falmouth in thirteen days after.

Q. What remarkable expression was Sir Humphry heard to repeat on the evening previous to this fatal disaster?

A. This — "Courage my lads, we are as near heaven at sea as we are on land."

Q. Have you not said that there was another vessel engaged in this adventure?

A. Yes; she was called the *Swallow*.

Q. What became of her?

A. Previously to leaving St. John's, Sir Humphry had despatched her to England with a considerable number of his followers, some of whom were sick, and others disinclined to proceed farther on the voyage.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE SETTLEMENTS ATTEMPTED IN THE REIGN OF JAMES I., ETC.

(1583—1630.)

Q. Did the disastrous results of the foregoing expedition put a stop to these adventures?

A. No; several attempts were soon afterwards made to plant a colony here, the most remarkable of which was one in 1610, by a company of English

gentlemen of the first respectability, among whom are to be found the names of Earl Southampton, Sir Percival Willoughby, and the great Sir Francis Bacon.

Q. Did this company obtain a grant of any portion of the Island ?

A. They did.

Q. Of what part ?

A. By letters patent, dated 27th April, 1610, James I. gave them all that part of Newfoundland lying between Cape Bonavista and Cape St. Mary.

Q. Did any of these individuals actually visit this island ?

A. No.

Q. Under whose direction then was the Colony sent hither ?

A. Under the direction of Mr. John Guy, who after a short passage arrived at Mosquito Cove, in Conception Bay, where he erected temporary dwellings, and opened a promising intercourse with the native Indians.

Q. Were the hopes of these emigrants realized ?

A. It is not likely they were ; for we learn that the whole party very shortly after returned to England.

Q. Did the fishery on the coast still continue to engage the attention of the British public ?

A. It did.

Q. What steps were taken by the home govern-

ment at the time, to remedy abuses and settle such disputes as would naturally arise in the prosecution of the fishery?

A. A Commissioner named Whitburn was sent hither to hold courts; he had power to empanel juries and try cases in the ordinary way.

Q. When were permanent dwelling houses first erected in Newfoundland?

A. About the year 1614.

Q. Who was Sir George Calvert?

A. Principal Secretary of State to James I. By letters patent, in 1623, he became absolute lord and proprietor of all the south-east part of the island comprehended in the extensive peninsula formed by the bays of Placentia and Trinity. This he erected into a province under the name of Avalon, and sending thither a considerable colony, appointed a Capt. Wynn as governor.

Q. In what part of the province did Wynn settle?

A. At Ferryland, where he built a large dwelling house, a granary, and some stores.

Q. Did not Wynn in the following year return a flattering report of the soil and climate?

A. He did; in his despatches to Sir George, he stated that so early as the 17th August, wheat, barley and oats were eared, and that various garden vegetables had attained maturity.

Q. What effect had these accounts upon the absent proprietor?

A. That of inducing him to remove thither with his family; he had lately been created Lord Baltimore; and upon his arrival at Ferryland he caused a house suitable to his rank to be erected, and also a strong fort.

Q. How long did he reside there?

A. He, or at least some part of his family, resided there for many years.

Q. What subsequently happened?

A. Finding at length that his plantation was exposed to the depredations of the French, whose men-of-war were continually hovering on the coast, and that neither the soil nor the climate was so favorable to vegetation as he had at first been led to believe, he returned to England, and after obtaining a grant of lands on the neighboring continent, he suffered his possessions in Ferryland gradually to sink into decay.

CHAPTER III.

THE INTRODUCTION OF A REGULAR SYSTEM BY CHARLES I.

(1633 — 1634.)

Q. What British Monarch first caused a regular system to be adopted, with a view to the better governing of this island?

A. Charles I.

Q. In what year?

A. In the year 1633.

Q. Can you recount the substance of the most important of these regulations?

A. Yes, — they ordained that all persons accused of murder or theft (if the article stolen exceeded the value of forty shillings) should be conveyed to England for trial; that no flakes, fishing-stages, or cook-rooms, should be demolished at the end of the voyage; that no ballast-stones should be thrown overboard in the harbors; that according to the ancient custom, the master of the fishing vessel first arriving at any port should be admiral of the same during that season; that no taverns or houses of entertainment should be set up; and, lastly, that divine service, according to the established religion, should be duly celebrated on every Sunday.

Q. Was there not great inconvenience experienced in carrying prisoners to England for trial?

A. Unquestionably there was; and as it often happened that a number of witnesses was indispensable, heavy expenses also were necessarily incurred.

Q. What extent of power did the Government confer upon those fishing admirals?

A. They were authorised to determine any matters of dispute that might arise out of the ordinary transactions of the fishery; to see that all local rules and regulations were duly observed and carried out; and to enforce obedience to sundry acts of the Imperial Parliament. Partiality and corruption, however, were the more prominent features of their courts.

CHAPTER IV.

(1634—1728.)

Q. In what year did France, rather than relinquish the privilege of fishing on this coast, submit to pay a tribute to the British government?

A. In 1634, and continued to do so for forty-one years. It amounted to five per cent. on all fish taken by the French. In the reign of Charles II. however, this tribute was given up, and, from that moment, the French fishery rapidly increased.

Q. Did the French, in 1626, settle a colony in Placentia ?

A. They did; which led to frequent disagreements between them and the English.

Q. Were there many English settlements in Newfoundland in 1654 ?

A. It is recorded that there were fifteen different settlements existing at that time, and nearly four hundred families.

Q. What remarkable events happened in 1696 ?

A. The town of St. John's was taken and destroyed by a French fleet, and all the settlements in the country were demolished, except those at Bonavista and Carbonear, which effectually defended themselves. An English frigate lying in Bay Bulls was likewise taken and destroyed.

Q. What put a temporary stop to those depredations ?

A. The peace concluded at Ryswick in Holland, between England and France.

Q. What understanding then took place between these two nations relative to Newfoundland ?

A. They mutually agreed that it should be placed in the same state of division, with respect to each other, as it was at the commencement of the war.

Q. How long did it remain in this state ?

A. Until 1702, when war was again declared.

Q. What followed this declaration?

A. Queen Anne, then on the throne of England, sent a squadron hither under Sir John Leake, who gained possession of the whole country, captured no less than nine-and-twenty sail of the enemy, and returned home with his prizes towards the end of October.

Q. Did the English long remain in undisputed possession?

A. No; for very shortly afterwards the French attempted to become the sole masters of the Island; their garrison at Placentia received from Canada such accessions of strength as to be able, in 1705, to make a formidable attack upon the forts at St. John's.

Q. Was their attack upon these forts attended with success?

A. No; but they succeeded in spreading their devastations northward as far as Bonavista. In the following year they were again expelled by the English, and many of their men-of-war and fishing vessels either captured or destroyed.

Q. Did this put an end to the contentions of these two nations in regard to Newfoundland?

A. It did not. So impressed were their respective governments with the conviction of the importance of this island, that for the eight subsequent years the whole country presented a scene of per-

petual conflict, being sometimes in the hands of the English and at other times in the hands of the French.

Q. Was it *solely* on account of her fisheries that Newfoundland engrossed so much attention!

A. Her fishery was not the only thing that rendered her an object of importance; she formed an extensive nursery for seamen, and occupied a commanding geographical position with respect to the Canadas.

Q. Was it not about the time of which we are speaking that the first Episcopal Missionary was appointed for this country?

A. Yes, in 1705; his salary was but £50 per annum, though he had to perform his clerical duties at settlements nearly 200 miles apart.

Q. What was the treaty of Utrecht?

A. A compact of peace between England and her allies on the one part, and France on the other; concluded at the city of Utrecht, in the Netherlands, on the 4th of April, 1713.

Q. What was the substance of such part of this treaty as related to this country?

A. Newfoundland and the adjacent islands were declared to belong wholly to Great Britain, — liberty was given to the French to catch and dry fish only on that part of the coast lying to the north of Cape Bonavista and stretching along the western shore as far as Point Riche; — they were not to make any

fortifications or erections, except such as were necessary for the fishery; nor were they to remain in the Island longer than the process of curing their fish absolutely required.

Q. Was not the number of inhabitants in 1713 found to be considerably increased?

A. Yes.

Q. In what state was society at this period?

A. In a very disorderly one, owing to the differences which arose between the more resident population, on the one hand, and those who only visited the island during the fishing season, on the other.

Q. What produced these disagreements?

A. The advantage which the residents took of the others' absence to occupy, each returning spring, the places most convenient for conducting the fishery. This was looked upon as unfair by the disappointed party, who took every opportunity to annoy their rivals.

Q. Did the resident population receive at this time any encouragement from the home government?

A. No; the government at home were entirely opposed to the policy of rendering Newfoundland a permanent settlement. They regarded it rather as a temporary platform for the convenience of fishermen while prosecuting their voyage during the summer season.

CHAPTER V.

(1728 — 1762.)

Q. In what year were a Governor and regular Justices of the Peace appointed?

A. In 1728.

Q. Who was the Governor?

A. Captain Henry Osborne, of His Majesty's Ship *Squirrel*, an officer of distinguished merit and ability.

Q. What steps did he take on assuming the government?

A. He selected a competent person to fill the office of High Sheriff for the island, — authorized the Captains of the Ships of War then on the station to hold Surrogate Courts for the decision of civil causes, and corrected many abuses which had crept into society.

Q. What else did he do?

A. He divided the Island into convenient districts; levied a rate of half a quintal of fish on all boats and boats' rooms, or fishing establishments, for the construction of prisons; and with a view to the more summary punishment of evil doers in the more

populous settlements he caused to be erected several pair of stocks.

Q. Was the Governor supported in these salutary measures by the *Fishing Admirals?*

A. No; they were jealous of his power, and did all that they could to thwart and oppose him.

Q. What took place in 1737?

A. The Governor was empowered to establish a Court of Oyer and Terminer.

Q. Why was this Court instituted?

A. In consequence of the increase of crime, and the delay and expense which attended the sending of delinquents to England for trial, as stated in a former chapter.

Q. Who was Governor in 1740.

A. The Right Hon. Lord George Graham.

Q. By whom was he succeeded?

A. By the Hon. John Byng, in the following year.

Q. Did anything worthy of note happen during his administration?

A. Numerous captures were made by the squadron under his command on the vessels of Spain, which nation was then at war with England.

Q. How were these prizes disposed of?

A. A Vice-Admiralty Court was established here, which prevented the necessity of sending them across the Atlantic for trial and condemnation.

Q. Who was the succeeding Governor?

A. Sir Charles Hardy, Captain of His Majesty's Ship *Jersey*.

Q. In what year was he appointed?

A. In 1744.

Q. When did Lord Rodney assume the government?

A. In the year 1749; he was then a Post Captain.

Q. What is to be remarked of 1754?

A. It was in this year that Lord Baltimore revived his claim to the province of Avalon; but he had been so long out of possession that his claim was disallowed.

Q. Are you aware of any events in 1760 worthy of remembrance?

A. An attempt was this year made by one Scott and others to open an intercourse with the Indians; but both he and his companions were treacherously killed.

Q. Who was Lord Rodney's successor?

A. Governor Drake.

Q. What is remarkable of 1761?

A. So inconsiderable was the naval force on the station, that in order to protect the homeward-bound vessels, a merchant brig was equipped at the joint expense of the trade. The command was given to Lieut. John Neal.

Q. What was the consequence of leaving the island in this unprotected state ?

A. It was visited in the following year by a French squadron, which arrived at Bay Bulls on the 24th of June : here they landed some troops, who proceeded overland to St. John's.

Q. Relate what followed ?

A. The garrison at St. John's being incapable of defence, immediately surrendered, and sixty soldiers, together with the officers and crew of His Majesty's Ship *Gramont*, then lying in port, were made prisoners of war.

Q. Were their depredations confined to St. John's ?

A. No; they likewise took Carbonear and Trinity, where they inflicted every kind of injury on the fishery and trade.

CHAPTER VI.

(1762—1763.)

Q. You have stated that in 1762 the French were successful in their attack upon Newfoundland. How long did they hold possession of the country ?

A. But for a very few months. Intelligence of the affair having reached Lord Colville, at Halifax,

he immediately set sail for this coast. On arriving with his squadron off the mouth of St. John's, he found a superior number of the enemy, under the command of Admiral de Ternay, lying within at anchor.

Q. What subsequently happened?

A. Lord Colville, being joined by some transports having on board about eight hundred men, made immediate preparations for an attack. The troops, who were under the command of Colonel Amherst, effected a landing at Torbay, under a galling fire, and advanced upon Quidi Vidi, which they took sword in hand. They afterwards turned their attention to the commanding batteries on Signal Hill, then in the possession of the French, and such was the bravery of the British troops, that in a few moments the enemy were driven from their guns.

Q. Did not the French still occupy some strong forts in the centre of the town?

A. They did; but, on the night of the 17th September, after sustaining for some hours a brisk fire from their assailants, they surrendered themselves prisoners of war.

Q. Have you not said that Lord Colville, upon his arrival off St. John's, found a French squadron lying within at anchor?

A. Yes.

Q. Did these ships take no part in this conflict?

A. No; for they had previously put to sea under cover of a thick fog.

Q. Where were the British fleet at this time?

A. They had been driven off to sea by a heavy gale of wind.

Q. Did they fall in with the enemy's ships?

A. They descried them at a distance, but declined giving chase.

Q. Do you know the amount of loss sustained by the British in this action?

A. About twenty men, besides Lieut. Schuyler, of the Royal Americans, were killed. Captain McDonald, who commanded in the attack on Signal Hill, died of his wounds; and some other officers were severely wounded, but recovered.

Q. Were there not two individuals, inhabitants of the Island, who took an active and most praiseworthy part in the occurrences of those times?

A. There were, — namely, Robert Carter, Esq., of Ferryland, and Charles Garland, Esq., of Harbor Grace; the former supported a garrison at the Isle of Boys, and the latter a detachment of military on the island at the entrance to Carbonear. Their services were afterwards most honorably acknowledged by the Government.

Q. What circumstance may be adduced as a proof of the high opinion which the French government entertained as to the importance of Newfoundland?

A. By a definitive treaty, signed at Paris towards the beginning of 1763, France renounced *all her pretensions to Nova Scotia*, for the privilege of catching and curing fish on the northern parts of this Island.

Q. When was the coast of Labrador annexed to the government of Newfoundland ?

A. About the year 1763.

Q. What illustrious person was engaged in a survey of the coasts about the period last mentioned ?

A. The celebrated navigator, Captain James Cook.

CHAPTER VII.

(1763—1774.)

Q. What was the amount of population in 1763 ?

A. About thirteen thousand; but of these not more than one half were constant residents.

Q. What was then the extent of the fishery ?

A. In that year, no less than 386,274 quintals of codfish were taken and cured; 694 tierces of salmon, and the produce of train-oil was 1598 tuns.

Q. Can you tell the value of the furs obtained in this year ?

A. It exceeded £2000.

Q. Have you any idea of the number of vessels then employed in the trade?

A. Yes; nearly 400.

Q. Was the seal-fishery prosecuted at this time?

A. No.

Q. In what year was Captain Hugh Palliser sent hither as Governor.

A. In 1764, and continued till 1768. The rules and regulations which he made relative to the fishery afterwards passed into law.

Q. By whom was he succeeded?

A. By the Hon. John Byron, who was the first that issued a proclamation for the protection of the native savages.

Q. Who was his successor?

A. Commodore Molineaux, in 1772. He was afterwards created Lord Shuldham.

CHAPTER VIII.

(1774—1786.)

Q. Was Europe the only quarter from which Newfoundland received supplies at this period?

A. No; she imported from various parts of America, and in particular from the United States, at that time dependencies of Great Britain. From

these she imported provisions amounting to upwards of three hundred thousand pounds, annually.

Q. What effect had the memorable rupture which took place between Britain and her American colonies upon Newfoundland?

A. A very serious one; — the general Congress of the States having, in the fall of 1774, issued an order prohibiting the exportation of provisions to such of the sister colonies as remained unfriendly to the American cause, a scarcity of food, such as had never before been experienced in the country, prevailed throughout the land.

Q. What is remarkable of 1775?

A. One of the heaviest storms ever remembered in this Island occurred in that year. The sea suddenly rose twenty feet above its usual height, and the consequent loss of property on the land was immense. Numbers of square-rigged vessels went on shore, and were totally lost; hundreds of smaller craft shared the same fate; and it is estimated that at least three hundred human beings perished.

Q. Did the Americans after their declaration of war commit any depredations on this coast?

A. They did; and so well acquainted were they with the various harbors and coves, that they succeded in capturing vessels while lying at their owners' wharves.

Q. Were not the towns of Harbor Grace and

Carbonear very much annoyed by the privateers of that nation?

A. At first they were, till batteries of sufficient strength were erected at the mouths of those harbors.

Q. When was Rear Admiral Montague appointed Governor?

A. In 1776.

Q. For what was his administration remarkable?

A. Chiefly for the measures adopted to enforce pacific relations with the native tribes, many of whom had been killed by the out-port settlers.

Q. Who next succeeded to the government?

A. Rear Admiral Edwards, in 1779.

Q. Who had charge of affairs in 1782?

A. Vice Admiral John Campbell. His Secretary was Mr. Aaron Graham, from whose abilities the colony derived much benefit.

Q. What nations participated with England at this time in the right to take fish on this coast?

A. None — the English possessed the exclusive right.

Q. Did England preserve the exclusive right from that time forward?

A. No; France and the United States were re-admitted to a participation at the close of the war.

Q. What were the limits and extent of the *French Shore*, or that part of the coast on which the people of that nation were allowed to fish, as defined at the cessation of hostilites?

A. It was agreed that France should renounce her right of fishing on that line of coast lying between Cape Bonavista and Cape St. John; but from the latter Cape, situate on the eastern side of the Island, and in latitude about the fiftieth degree, she was, after proceeding north about, to extend her privilege down the western shores as far as Cape Ray.

Q. Was it understood by this agreement that the French fishermen were to enjoy within these bounds *an exclusive* right of fishery?

A. The Government of France has always regarded it so, though the claim has been steadily opposed by our colonists, and repeatedly questioned in the British Parliament.

CHAPTER IX.

(1786—1811.)

Q. Who was Governor in 1786?

A. Rear Admiral Elliot.

Q. When was a Court of Common Pleas first established here?

A. In 1789, by Admiral Mark Milbank, who was then Governor.

Q. Was not this followed by a Court of Civil and Criminal Jurisdiction?

A. Yes; it was called "*The Supreme Court of Newfoundland.*"

Q. Who was appointed Judge of this Court?

A. John Reeves, Esq., with a Commission as Chief Justice of the Island. Mr. Reeves was an eminent lawyer, and a man of extensive acquirements and deep penetration. During his short continuance in office, numerous abuses that had crept into the inferior courts were remedied, and the proceedings of those tribunals were thenceforth conducted with more regularity and order.

Q. In what year did the French Admiral Richery destroy the town of Bay Bulls?

A. In the year 1796.

Q. What number of vessels had Richery under his command?

A. Nine sail of the line, and several frigates.

Q. Who was Governor in this year?

A. Sir James Wallace, an officer of great determination and spirit. He made efficient preparations to repel Richery in the event of his attacking the town of St. John's; but the latter, upon ascertaining the strength of the fortifications, thought it advisable to keep at a distance.

Q. By whom was Wallace succeeded?

A. By Vice Admiral Waldegrave.

Q. Are you informed as to the extent of the fishery at this period?

A. The number of quintals of codfish reported to have been cured in 1795, was six hundred thousand, valued at eighteen shillings per quintal. Four thousand nine hundred seals were also taken, besides a vast quantity of salmon. The whole amount of capital vested this year in the trade, was estimated at little less than a million and a half pounds sterling.

Q. Who was Judge of the Supreme Court, during the administration of Admiral Waldegrave ?

A. Richard Routh, Esq.

Q. When did Admiral Gambier administer the government ?

A. From 1801 to 1803. He was succeeded by Sir Erasmus Gower.

Q. What attempts were made to benefit society at this juncture ?

A. Sunday schools were introduced ; and associations for the relief of the poor, (termed Benevolent Irish Societies,) were formed, both in the capital and Conception Bay.

Q. What event worthy of note happened in 1807 ?

A. The first newspaper ever issued in the Island was published this year; it was entitled "*The Royal Gazette, and Newfoundland Advertiser.*" The proprietor was Mr. John Ryan.

Q. What occurred in 1808 ?

A. The formation at St. John's of a Volunteer Militia.

Q. Were not the Courts of Judicature, which had hitherto been merely the subject of experiment, established on a more permanent footing about this time?

A. Yes.

Q. Was the coast of Labrador included in the government of Newfoundland at the period of which you speak?

A. It had been separated from it for some time, but was now re-annexed to it under the administration of Admiral Holloway.

Q. Who succeeded him?

A. Sir John Thomas Duckworth, K. B., in 1810.

Q. What were among the first acts of his administration?

A. He issued a proclamation for the protection of the Indians; and sent to the Bay of Exploits a small armed schooner, under the command of Lieut. Buchan, for the purpose of obtaining more authentic information respecting that ill-used people.

Q. What was the result of this expedition?

A. Nothing beneficial was accomplished, and two of the marines whom Lieut. Buchan had with him as a guard, were killed by the savages.

Q. What took place in 1811?

A. An act authorizing the holding of Surrogate Courts on the Coast of Labrador, was passed by the

British Parliament; some necessary improvements were effected in re-building St. John's; and a governmental reward of one hundred pounds was offered to any person who should bring about a friendly understanding with the Red Indian tribe.

CHAPTER X.

Q. Did anything worthy of notice happen in 1812?

A. War between Great Britain and the United States of America broke out on the 17th June; consequently much excitement and alarm prevailed throughout the Island.

Q. In what year was the treaty of Paris concluded?

A. The treaty of Paris was concluded on the 17th June, 1814, exactly two years after the American declaration of war.

Q. What reference was made to Newfoundland in this treaty?

A. So much of the treaty of Utrecht as gave to the English the possession of all the adjacent islands, was abrogated; and the French right of fishing placed on the same footing as in 1792.

Q. What change began about this period to be effected in the fisheries of this island?

A. The *bank* fishery suffered a considerable falling off, while the outfit for Labrador was greatly increased. The sealing voyage began to be more extensively prosecuted, and the vessels employed therein to be of a larger size.

Q. Can you furnish an idea of the extent and value of the exports in 1814?

A. One million two hundred thousand quintals of dried codfish were exported in this year, valued at £2 per quintal, besides twenty thousand quintals of core fish, shipped off in barrels; six thousand tuns of cod or train oil, at £32 per tun; one hundred and fifty-six thousand seal skins, at 5*s.* each; four thousand six hundred and sixty-six tuns of seal oil, at £36 per tun; besides salmon, mackerel, furs, and berries, amounting to £10,000 sterling.

Q. Do you know what were then the current prices of some of the principal articles of provision?

A. Bread sold at £4 per cwt.; flour at £6 per barrel; pork, £8 to £10 per barrel; butter at 3*s.* per pound; salt, per hhd. 40*s.*; and shop goods, or wearing apparel, in proportion.

Q. Were not servants' wages enormously high at this juncture?

A. Yes; an ordinary fisherman obtained at the

rate of £12 per month, while a superior "*splitter*" could command £20 for the same period.

Q. What effect had the peace of 1814 upon the trade of this Island?

A. A severe and general depression was immediately felt; the decline which took place in the value of the staple products of the colony, and the numerous mercantile failures consequent upon this change, produced universal embarrassment.

Q. Who succeeded Sir John Thos. Duckworth?

A. Sir Richard Goodwin Keates.

Q. What events happened in 1816?

A. The destruction of a large portion of St. John's by fire, in the month of February; as also the parish church at Harbor Grace in the following autumn.

Q. Did not the fire at St. John's, at so inclement a season, produce great suffering?

A. It necessarily did; but the distress was in part alleviated by a liberal grant from the Parent Government, which was distributed among the sufferers through a Committee of Relief.

Q. What occurred in 1817.

A. A scarcity of food, which prevailed throughout the Island from January till June; insomuch that mobs arose in various places, opened the stores by force, and carried off the provisions. This season of scarcity is known as the "*Winter of the Ralls.*"

Q. Did not the British Parliament institute an inquiry into the state of the colony this year?

A. It did.

Q. What did this elicit?

A. That 800 vessels were annually employed in the trade and fisheries, and that the yearly produce of the country amounted to two millions of pounds sterling; the population was estimated at 80,000.

Q. Who was Governor in 1817?

A. Vice Admiral Pickmore.

Q. What were the most memorable events of this year?

A. Two extensive fires in the town of St. John's, which consumed upwards of two hundred houses, besides a large number of stores containing an immense quantity of provisions, imported as supplies for the winter season. Both these conflagrations happened in November.

Q. To whom were the inhabitants of St. John's greatly indebted on this occasion?

A. To the citizens of Boston, who, on hearing the news, freighted a vessel, and with characteristic generosity despatched her with food to the relief of the sufferers.

Q. Is this noble act on the part of the citizens of Boston still remembered in the colony?

A. Yes, with feelings of gratitude.

Q. What took place in 1818?

A. The death of the Governor, Vice Admiral Pickmore ; his remains were conveyed to England in His Majesty's Ship *Fly.*

Q. Who assumed the temporary management of affairs, on the decease of the Governor ?

A. Capt. Bowker, of H. M. S *Sir Francis Drake.*

Q. When did Sir Charles Hamilton come hither as Governor ?

A. In the course of the same year.

Q. For what was 1818 remarkable ?

A. For its successful fisheries, and the consequent revival of trade and commerce.

Q. Who was Chief Justice during the administration of Sir Charles Hamilton ?

A. Francis Forbes, Esq., of Lincoln's Inn ; his talents were of a high order, and his decisions on the Bench gave general satisfaction ; he came into office on the 4th August, 1816, and continued therein for about six years.

Q. How were the laws administered in the outports at the period in question ?

A. By means of Surrogate and Sessions Courts. Appeals from the Surrogate to the Supreme Court lay in suits exceeding £40.

Q. Can you name any institutions that were established here in 1822 ?

A. "The Newfoundland Free Schools," in con-

nection with "The Newfoundland and British North America School Society."

Q. Who succeeded Mr. Forbes in the office of Chief Justice?

A. Richard Alexander Tucker, Esq., A. M., of the Inner Temple, on the 5th May, 1823; a gentleman of high standing in his profession, and one deservedly esteemed by the people generally.

CHAPTER XI.

(1826 — 1831.)

Q. What change was effected in the judicial system, in 1826?

A. A very important one, which was authorized by a Royal Charter, promulgated on the 2d of January, under the administration of Sir Thomas Cochrane.

Q. What was the substance of this charter?

A. It directed that in future the Supreme Court of Newfoundland should be held by a Chief Judge, and two Assistant Judges, that the Island should be divided in three districts — a Northern, Central, and Southern; — that at each of these, three separate Circuit Courts should be held, in which one or other

of the said judges should preside; — that the Supreme Court should admit a sufficient number of qualified Attorneys and Solicitors to practice in the several courts.

Q. What were the salaries assigned respectively to these judges?

A. Twelve hundred pounds sterling per annum for the Chief Judge, and seven hundred, each, for the two assistants.

Q. Was there not an expedition into the interior undertaken in 1827.

A. Yes.

Q. What was its object?

A. The civilization of the native Indians?

Q. Who had charge of this expedition?

A. Mr. E. Cormack.

Q. Was the enterprise successful.

A. No; not a single Indian was fallen in with, though the expedition penetrated the heart of the country, traversing the island from east to west. Some curious and valuable information, however, was obtained respecting its agricultural capabilities and mineral wealth.

Q. In what year was Newfoundland first visited by a Protestant Bishop?

A. In 1827, by Dr. Inglis, then Bishop of Nova Scotia. Governor Cochrane returned to England for a few months this year, and during his absence the

administration of affairs devolved upon Chief Justice Tucker, as President of the Council.

Q. What occurrences of note happened in 1828?

A. The public road between the Cove and St. John's was greatly improved, partly by private subscription, but chiefly at the expense of the local government; the building of the new Government House was commenced, and the cultivation of the soil met with a sudden and pretty general advocacy.

Q. What took place in 1829?

A. The true position of the *Virgin Rocks*, on the western edge of the Grand Bank, in longitude 50° 56′ 35″ W., and latitude 46° 26′ 23″ N., was determined by Lieut. Bishop, commanding one of His Majesty's ships.

Q. What occurred in 1830?

A. The death of Dr. Scallan, Roman Catholic Bishop, who was succeeded in his office by Dr. Fleming. A stone court-house and prison were erected in Harbor Grace; and Government House, in St. John's, was completed at the expense of £60,000.

CHAPTER XII.

(1831 — 1841.)

Q. Relate the most important events of 1832.

A. A Representative Assembly, agreeably to the prayers of the inhabitants, was granted to the colony. A calamitous fire which destroyed ninety-seven buildings, including the Episcopal Church, broke out on the 8th August, in the town of Harbor Grace. An election of members for the General Assembly took place in November.

Q. Into how many electoral districts was the Island divided?

A. Into nine.

Q. What number of representatives was appointed to each?

A. The district of St. John's had three; that of Conception Bay, four; those of Trinity Bay, Bonavista Bay, Fogo, Fortune Bay, Burin, and Ferryland, one each; and that of Placentia and St. Mary's, two, making in the whole fifteen representatives.

Q. Who were eligible for election?

A. All persons of the full age of twenty-one years, being of sound understanding — natural born

subjects, or lawfully naturalized — never having been convicted of any infamous crime — and having for two years next immediately preceding the day of election, occupied as owner or tenant, a dwelling house within the Island.

Q. What was the extent of the exports of the colony about this period, taking the average of three years?

A. Six hundred thousand quintals of cod-fish, valued at ten shillings per quintal; three thousand tuns train oil, at eighteen pounds per tun; four hundred thousand seal skins, at one shilling each; five thousand tuns of seal oil, at twenty pounds per tun; and salmon and furs valued at twenty thousand pounds; — making a total of £494,000.

Q. What were the imports during the same time?

A. Of bread, ninety-four thousand bags; flour, thirty-eight thousand barrels; pork, twenty-three thousand barrels; and of butter, one million three hundred thousand pounds.

Q. What occurred in 1833?

A. The first session of the General Assembly was opened on New Year's Day. Mr. Tucker resigned his commission as Chief Justice — an office he had filled with distinguished ability; — and a Presentation Convent was established in St. John's.

Q. Who succeeded Mr. Tucker as Chief Justice of the Island?

A. Henry John Boulton, Esquire, of Upper Canada. The Hon. James Simms acted in the interval prior to his appointment.

Q. What took place in 1834?

A. The arrival of Henry Prescott, Esquire, as Governor of the Colony.

Q. What did the imports and exports amount to this year?

A. The former to £618,757, and the latter to £826,659.

Q. What number of vessels, from sundry parts, arrived in Newfoundland in 1834?

A. Of British there were 888, and of American and Spanish 20.

Q. How many vessels were this year employed in the seal fishery on this coast?

A. About 400.

Q. What was the population of the colony at this time?

A. It was estimated at about eighty thousand.

Q. When was the first Banking House established in the Island?

A. In 1836.

Q. What improvement marked the year 1837?

A. The erection of a light-house on Harbor Grace Island.

Q. In what year, and by whom, was the first geological survey of the country undertaken?

A. In 1839, by J. B. Jukes, Esquire, F. G. S.

Q. When was the Roman Catholic Cathedral at St. John's commenced?

A. In the year 1841.

CHAPTER XIII.

(1841 — 1854.)

Q. What occurred in 1843?

A. A change took place in the constitution of the Assembly, which was now incorporated with the Council; it was opened on the 17th January, by Sir John Harvey, the then Governor; and it was termed "The Amalgamated Assembly of Newfoundland." The foundation-stone of the Protestant Cathedral was laid this year.

Q. Who was the Chief Justice in 1844?

A. Thomas Norton, Esquire; he was preceded by Chief Justice Bourne.

Q. When was gas-light first used in the colony?

A. In 1845.

Q. Was it not about this year that the Harbor Grace and Carbonear Grammar Schools were instituted?

A. It was.

Q. What memorable events happened in 1846?

A. The almost total destruction of St. John's by fire, on the 9th day of June.

Q. Was there nothing else worthy of note occurred in this year?

A. Yes; a furious hurricane was experienced on the 19th September, which ravaged the whole coast, destroying a vast amount of property and very many lives.

Q. When did the Amalgamated Assembly hold its last session?

A. In 1847.

Q. Who arrived in the colony as Governor this year?

A. Sir John Gaspard Le Marchant, as the successor of Sir John Harvey who assumed the government of Nova Scotia.

Q. What improvements were carried forward under the administration of Sir Gaspard LeMarchant?

A. Numerous works tending to benefit society were advanced during the administration of this governor; St. John's was plentifully supplied with wholesome water; agriculture was encouraged; the breed of cattle improved; Mechanics' Institutes were founded; public edifices erected; and a better system adopted for relieving the poor.

Q. Did the amalgamated form of government continue, under the administration of Sir Gaspard Le Marchant?

A. No; it was set aside, and the Legislature reverted to its former constitution.

Q. Who succeeded Mr. Norton as Chief Justice of the Island?

A. Francis Brady, Esquire, in 1847.

Q. By whom were the reins of government assumed after the departure of Sir J. Gaspard Le Marchant?

A. Upon Sir Gaspard's appointment to the government of Nova Scotia, his place was supplied by His Excellency Ker Baillie Hamilton.

Q. Name a few of the improvements between the years 1847 and 1854, inclusive.

A. Steam and telegraphic communication between Conception Bay and St. John's; the town of Harbor Grace lit with Kerosene Gas; the Market House in the capital opened, and various places of worship erected throughout the Island.

Q. What was the amount of population as shown by the census of 1845?

A. About ninety-eight thousand.

Q. What proportion did the different religious bodies bear to each other?

A. There were fifty-one thousand Protestants to forty-seven thousand Catholics.

Q. Of what denominations was the Protestant church composed?

A. Episcopalians, Wesleyans, Congregational-

ists, and Presbyterians; of these, thirty-five thousand were of the first-named church, and fourteen thousand of the second.

Q. How many churches and chapels were then existing in the colony?

A. One hundred and forty.

Q. What was the number of schools in operation at this period?

A. Two hundred and nine; a fourth of which were located in Conception Bay.

Q. How were these supported?

A. Partly by grants from the local legislature, and partly from the funds of religious societies. This of course refers to the public schools.

Q. Name a few of the associations which have been formed in Newfoundland for philanthropic and other purposes.

A. Benevolent Irish Societies, Dorcas Societies, Temperance Societies, Mechanics' Institutes, Agricultural Societies, Insurance Clubs, Steam, Gas, and Water Companies, Life Assurance Associations, and many others.

Q. Do you know the total number of towns and settlements in the Island?

A. Four hundred and twenty-one; viz:—two hundred and eleven on the north side of the capital, inclusive, and two hundred and ten on the south.

Q. Can you further particularize them?

A. In the electoral district of St. John's, 10 settlements, with a population of 25,000; district of Conception Bay, 50, population 28,000; Trinity Bay, 47, population 8,800; Bonavista Bay, 40, population 7,200; Twillingate and Fogo, 64, population, 6,800; — these are on the north.

Q. Furnish those on the south.

A. District of Ferryland, 16, population 4,400; Placentia and St. Mary's, 114, population 6,500; Burin, 18, population 4,400; Fortune Bay, 62, population 5,100.

Q. Do these embrace the whole?

A There are twenty-three small settlements between Cape Ray and Bonne Bay, with a population of 2,200 souls, not included in the foregoing. These were the numbers given by the census of 1845.

Q. Can you inform me at what rate the population of Newfoundland is supposed to increase?

A. It was found that for the ten years prior to '45 the population had increased about 30 per cent.

Q. Are not the present native population of the Island the descendants of English, Irish, and Scotch settlers?

A. Yes; with the exception of a few who derive their origin from Jersey emigrants.

Q. In what does the military protection of the Island consist?

A. Chiefly in the fortifications around the cap-

ital, and a few companies of soldiers, amounting to about 400 men.

Q. What is the amount of Revenue raised in the colony?

A. About eighty-five thousand pounds sterling per annum.

Q. How is this sum obtained?

A. From Colonial or Import duties, £63,000; Light-Dues, £3,000; and from other sources about £20,000.

Q. How much of this is appropriated to Education?

A. The sum set apart for educational purposes, in 1852, was £9,529 10*s.* 10*d.*

Q. What amount is annually assigned for the support of a Police and Magistracy in this Island?

A. Six thousand pounds.

Q. What is given out of the Public Treasury for the relief of the poor?

A. About nine thousand a-year.

Q. What amount of salary per annum does the Governor receive?

A. Three thousand pounds.

Q. How many vessels and boats are annually engaged in prosecuting the fisheries?

A. In the Spring, or seal fishery, about 400 vessels; and in the Summer, or cod fishery, nearly 15,000 of all sizes.

Q. How many acres of land were under cultivation at the last census?

A. Thirty thousand acres.

Q. What number of cattle, say cows and horses, were then owned in the colony?

A. Of the former, 8,000; of the latter, 2,000.

Q. What was the total amount of Imports in 1852?

A. £795,758.

Q. State the value of Exports for the same period?

A. £965,772.

Q. How many Newspapers are published in the colony?

A. At present, (1854,) seven only.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AND PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE ISLAND; ITS BAYS, BANKS, CAPES, HARBORS, ETC.; CLIMATE AND SOIL.

Q. How is Newfoundland situated?

A. The Island of Newfoundland is situated at the mouth of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, to which it affords a northern and a southern entrance. It lies between the latitudes of 46° 40′, and 51° 37′, N.,

and beween the longitudes of 52° 25′, and 59° 15′, W.; it is of a triangular form, and about a thousand miles in circumference.

Q. How many square miles does the surface of the Island contain?

A. Nearly forty thousand.

Q. Repeat the names of its principal bays.

A. On the S. E. side is the Bay of St. John's, in which is the capital, bearing the same name. To the north of this lies the beautiful Bay of Conception, containing on its western shores the ports of Harbor Grace, Carbonear, Brigus, Port-de-Grave, and Bay Roberts, with others of less note. In this bay also are situated the fine islands of Great and Little Belle Isle, and Kelly's Island. More northerly, are the Bays of Trinity, Bonavista, Gander, Exploits, Notre Dame, White, and Hare; and on the most northern extremity is the small Bay of Pistolet.

Q. What Bays are situate on the south side of the Island?

A. The principal are, Fortune Bay, Bays of Placentia, St. Mary's, and Trepassey.

Q. Are there not some on the western side?

A. Yes; St. George's Bay, and Bay of Islands. Here are also several large rivers and an extensive lake.

Q. Where is Cape Ray?

A. On the south-western angle of the Island.

Q. What is the most eastern Cape called?

A. Cape Spear.

Q. Where is Cape Norman?

A. On the northern extremity of the Island.

Q. What separates Newfoundland from Labrador?

A. The Straits of Belle Isle.

Q. Repeat the names of the principal islands by which Newfoundland is surrounded?

A. To the south are St. Peter's and Miquelon, both of which are in possession of the French. More westerly, are the Magdalen Islands, Cape Breton, and the large but unpeopled island of Anticosti. On the east are New World Island, Fogo, Funk, and Wadhams. Off the French Shore lie Groais Island and Belle Isle.

Q. How is the Grand Bank situated?

A. Its western edge is rather more than a degree to the east of this Island. It is five degrees wide from east to west, in its broadest part, and about nine degrees long, from north to south. It is entirely covered with the sea, which varies in depth from ten to one hundred fathoms.

Q. Are there not similar elevations of the bed of the ocean in the vicinity of the Grand Bank?

A. Yes; namely, the Outer Bank, which lies about $2\frac{1}{2}$ degrees farther east; and Green Bank,

Mizen Bank, Porpoise Bank, and Banquereau, which lie to the west of the Great Bank.

Q. Is not the Island subject to dense fogs?

A. On the southern coast, from May to October, the fogs are frequent and exceedingly dense; but from Conception Bay northward the sky is clear and the air most salubrious.

Q. Are the winters here as cold as they are in Great Britain?

A. They are much more so; but rarely so cold as they are in the Canadas.

Q. What is the lowest degree of cold experienced in Newfoundland, as indicated on the scale of Fahrenheit's thermometer?

A. From 6° to 10° below *zero* is generally the lowest point to which the mercury descends during the severest winter. There are, however, a few instances on record wherein it indicated as low as 20°.

Q. To what depth does the snow fall in Newfoundland, taking the average of our winters?

A. From four to six feet.

Q. How long does the winter usually continue?

A. Occasionally the weather is very mild; but generally speaking the frost lasts from the beginning of December to the last of March, and sometimes for a month later.

Q. Is not the navigation closed during this period?

A. It was so formerly, but of late years vessels arrive and depart every month in the season.

Q. Which are the warmest months in the year?

A. July and August.

Q. What is the temperature of these months?

A. During the hottest weather in these months, the thermometer ranges between 75° and 90° in the shade — rarely, however, in the course of the season, ascending above 80°.

Q. Of what description is the soil?

A. The soil here as in other countries is of various degrees of fertility, depending upon the nature of the underlying rock and a variety of causes; but generally speaking it is loose, shallow, and sterile, requiring much labor to render it productive.

Q. Does not this country yield an abundance of grass?

A. In certain situations it does, both wild and cultivated.

Q. Have we not also potatoes and oats?

A. Yes, of an excellent quality; but the former have degenerated since visited by the rot. Turnips, carrots, and other garden vegetables are likewise plentiful and of a superior description.

Q. What is known of the interior of the Island?

A. The interior of the country has never been explored, and consequently our knowledge of it is exceedingly limited; but from information derived

from persons who have crossed it at one or two points, it chiefly consists of ponds and marshes, diversified occasionally with rising grounds *destitute of timber*, which are therefore called "barrens." This applies to the more central portions of the island, for nearer the coast the land is well wooded.

CHAPTER XV.

OF THE ABORIGINES, OR RED INDIAN TRIBE.

Q. Were there any inhabitants on the island when discovered by Cabot in 1497 ?

A. Yes; there was a tribe of Red Indians, or native savages.

Q. Do they still exist on the Island ?

A. It is generally supposed that they are now extinct.

Q. What has befallen this primitive race ?

A. They have been exterminated by the whites and Micmac Indians, with whom they waged perpetual warfare.

Q. In what part of the island did they chiefly reside ?

A. On the eastern coast, in the immediate vicinity of the Exploits River.

Q. Were these people acquainted with the use of the gun?

A. No; their arms consisted simply of the bow and arrow.

Q. Of what were these implements made?

A. The bow, which was about five feet in length, was made of elastic wood; the arrow was simply a straight piece of pine, armed with bone or iron at the point, and having a few goose quills at the other extremity to direct its flight.

Q. Describe their huts.

A Their huts, or wigwams, were of a conical form, ingeniously covered with the skins of deer, or with broad pieces of birch rind. The frame consisted of poles fastened together at the top, and spreading to the required width at the base.

Q. How were their canoes made?

A. Their canoes were formed of frail pieces of light wood, covered with birch rind sewed together with the roots of trees split to a convenient size; the seams were payed over with resin. The usual size of these boats was from twelve to fifteen feet in length, by three to four feet wide.

Q. On what did these Indians subsist?

A. Venison was their favorite food; but they also ate birds, fish, and berries, and in seasons of scarcity any kind of offal.

Q. What were their deer-fences?

A. A species of quickset hedge, reared along the banks of rivers, ponds, or lakes, and which sometimes extended over a distance of forty miles.

Q. Of what use were those fences ?

A. They interrupted the deer in their migrations across the country, and were of great advantage to the Indian in his hunting excursions.

Q. How were they made ?

A. Large trees growing in a line along the margins of lakes were cut somewhat more than half through ; they were then made to fall so as to coincide exactly with each other ; care was taken that the distance between each should be rather less than their respective heights, in order that the top of one might be properly fastened to the butt of another. Openings were left at certain intervals, through which the deer were obliged to pass after crossing the water. At these openings the hunters lay concealed, and dispatched their victims without toil or difficulty.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF THE NATURAL HISTORY.

Q. Name the wild quadrupeds of Newfoundland.

A. Of these we have but a small variety. Deer are met with in the western parts of the island, where they herd together in large numbers. They resort to the more northern portion of the country during the summer season, but retire south on the approach of winter.

Q. What other animals have we ?

A. Bears, both white and black, wolves, foxes, beavers, otters, martens, hares, and musk rats. These are the principal.

Q. What of the seal ?

A. Seals in immense numbers, and of various species, surround the coast from the beginning of March to the last of April. About the end of February they bring forth their young, which are wafted hither on the fields of ice, and are taken by thousands.

Q. Enumerate the birds.

A. Hawks, ravens, owls, ptarmigan, curlew, plover, shore-larks, migratory thrushes, red sparrows, white-throat sparrows, woodpeckers, kingfishers, swallows, snipes, bitterns, sandpipers, snow-buntings,

cross-bills, linnets, jays, tomtits, &c.; and among the water fowl, geese, ducks, loos, gulls, puffins, gullimots, and gannets.

Q. What description of fish abound on the coast?

A. Codfish, salmon, herring, (mackerel have forsaken us for 28 years,) caplin, halibut, sharks, dog-fish, lobsters, plaice, a small species of crab (not more than four inches in diameter), smelts, squids, lance, gurnards, &c. The lakes in the interior contain myriads of trout.

Q. Have we no snakes?

A. Snakes, toads, and frogs, are entirely unknown.

Q. What insects have we in Newfoundland?

A. Butterflies, moths, dragon-flies, cuckoo-flies, ants, caddis-flies, bees, wasps, beetles, moschetoes, and a variety of others.

Q Name a few of our indigenous trees.

Q. Pine, spruce, and fir, compose the four-fifths of our groves, but we have also haematac, birch, willow, asp, mountain-ash, and alder.

Q. What are our other vegetable products?

A. Savine or juniper, sarsaparilla, swamp-laurel, maiden-hair, trailing-evergreens, a variety of mosses, dog-roses, and a profusion of sweet-smelling flowers.

Q. Repeat the names of a few of our wild berries.

A. Raspberries, cranberries, strawberries, whortleberries, choke-cherries, &c.

Q. What mineral productions have we here ?

A. Coal in small quantities has been found in different parts ; gypsum abounds in one or two localities ; beds of marble, lime-stone, and roofing-slate, are of frequent occurrence, and copper ore has been discovered near the town of St. John's. It is asserted by some, that the interior of the colony is rich in minerals of the most valuable character.

CHAPTER XVII.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

Q. What is meant by the terms spring and summer voyages ?

A. The seal-fishery is termed the spring, and cod-fishery the summer voyage.

Q. How many months are the people engaged in these voyages respectively ?

A. In the former about two months, and in the latter about five. The one terminates about the last of April, the other extends from June to October.

Q. How are they occupied during the rest of the year ?

A. Many of them in clearing the land, drawing timber from the woods, and building craft for the fisheries.

Q. What are the different denominations of trades in the island?

A. Such as are generally found in all civilized communities, namely, — carpenters, coopers, tailors, shoemakers, blacksmiths, sailmakers, and the like.

Q. How would you characterize the inhabitants of the country?

A. Among the industrial classes, the men are intelligent, athletic, hardy, and enterprising; the women, in the main, thrifty, fond of their homes, and remarkably handsome.

Q. Of what materials are the dwelling-houses constructed?

A. Chiefly of wood, except at St. John's, where the principal streets are of brick and stone; the shops being considered among the finest in the world.

Q. From whence are received the chief importations?

A. Flour and pork from the United States and Canada; biscuit and butter from Copenhagen and Hamburg; salt from England and Spain; coal from Cape Breton; and dry goods, cutlery, &c., from the United Kingdom.

Q. Are there no native manufactures?

A. None of importance.

Q. Would not the establishment of these be of service to the Colony?

A. Most decidedly it would.

Q. On what, under Providence, depends the future advancement of this country?

A. The industry, honesty, and sobriety of the working classes; the mutual forbearance, charity, and social concord of its various sects; the proper observance of the Sabbath; the due support of religious and educational institutions; and the good example and patriotic exertions of its leading men.

GOVERNORS.

The following table affords a correct account of the number of Governors from 1749 to 1854, with the years of their respective administration : —

1749 — Rodney.
1750 to 1752 — Drake.
1753 to 1754 — Bonfoy.
1755 to 1756 — Dorrill.
1757 to 1759 — Edwards.
1760 — Webb.
1761 to 1763 — Graves.
1764 to 1768 — Palliser.
1769 to 1771 — Byron.
1772 to 1774 — Shuldham.
1775 — Duff.
1776 to 1778 — Montagu.
1779 to 1781 — Edwards.
1782 to 1785 — Campbell.
1786 to 1788 — Elliott.
1789 to 1791 — Milbank.
1792 to 1793 — King.

1794 to 1796 — Wallace.
1797 to 1799 — Waldegrave.
1800 to 1801 — Pole.
1802 to 1803 — Gambier.
1804 to 1806 — Gower.
1807 to 1809 — Holloway.
1810 to 1812 — Duckworth.
1813 to 1815 — Keats.
1816 to 1817 — Pickmore.
1818 to 1824 — Hamilton.
1825 to 1834 — Cochrane.
1834 to 1841 — Prescott.
1841 to 1846 — Harvey.
1847 to 1852 — Le Marchant.
1853 — Hamilton.

ADDENDA.

NATURAL PHENOMENA.

Thrush (*Turdus migratorius*) arrives	April	1
Shore-lark (*Alauda alpestris*) first heard	"	20
Grass springs	May	1
Codfish taken	"	10
Potatoes planted	"	10
Alder shooting leaves	"	20
Dandelion flowered	June	1
Willow Catkins out	"	15
Young Thrushes hatched	"	20
Caplin (*S. arct. Lin.*) arrive and spawn	"	23
Cherry trees in blossom	"	30
Butterflies (white) deposit eggs	"	30
Green pease	July	20
House-flies numerous	"	25
Caplin depart	"	25
Squids (*Sep. lol.*) appear	August	1
Hay-making commences	"	10
Rove-beetles (*Staph. vill.*) fly in swarms	"	15
Cherries ripe	September	15
Leaves of the Birch tree fade	"	30
Thrushes migrate southwards	"	30
Potatoes dug up	October	5
Red berries of the mountain ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*) ripe	"	20
First snow showers	"	31

Snow-buntings appear ..... October 31
Indian summer ..... November 15
Frost and snow permanent for the season ..... December 10

MEAN TEMPERATURE of the months, in latitude 47° 33′ 22″, N.; longitude 52° 45′ 29″, W.:—

January...22.7 deg.	May .....37.5 deg.	September 53.5 deg.
February..19.5 "	June.....49.8 "	October...44.2 "
March ....24.0 "	July .....57.4 "	November.33.9 "
April .....33.8 "	August...54.0 "	December.28.5 "

TIMES OF HIGH WATER at sundry places on the coast, at the Full and Change of the Moon — together with the vertical rise of the tide, at Spring Tides:—

Croque Harbor,.....	6h.	30m.	6½ feet.
Ferrolle, ...	11	45	
Fort St. John,.....	9	00	
St. John's, (capital), ...	7	50	5
St. Peter's,.....	9	00	7
Placentia Harbor,.....	9	15	8
Harbor Grace, (determined by the author, in 1849,).....	8	35	8
Pistolet, ...	6	45	5

It is remarkable that the principal shipwrecks which have occurred at ST. SHOTTS, on the southern coast of the Island, have happened on or about the time of the *Spring tides.* Hence it has been inferred that the current runs faster there at those epochs than it does during the intervening times; *a circumstance that ought to be made the subject of direct observation.*

CATECHISM

OF THE

History of Newfoundland,

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

ON THE

DISCOVERY OF AMERICA

BY THE

ANCIENT SCANDINAVIANS.

INTENDED CHIEFLY FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS.

BY WM. CHAS. ST. JOHN.

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